

VZCZCXRO6275
OO RUEHDBU
DE RUEHBUL #1009/01 0861014
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 271014Z MAR 07
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7096
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3851

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001009

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO DAS GASTRIGHT, SCA/A, S/CRS, SA/PB, S/CT,
EUR/RPM
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG
NSC PASS TO NSA FOR AHARRIMAN
OSD FOR SHIVERS
CENTCOM FOR CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, POLAD, JICCENT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/18/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: SPANTA SAYS AFGHANS WANT TO
SEE LONG-TERM U.S. COMMITMENT

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald Neumann for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

SUMMARY

1. (C) During a bilateral meeting, Foreign Minister Spanta and senior members of the U.S. Delegation to the March 13 US-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership meeting reaffirmed the strategic importance of the bilateral relationship. Both agreed the Strategic Partnership meeting was particularly important to demonstrate to the Afghan people the enduring U.S. commitment to Afghanistan over the long-term. Spanta reported on positive developments with Pakistan on jirgas. U.S. Delegation stressed the importance of achieving visible progress on good governance, corruption and counternarcotics as a condition for continued Congressional support. Both sides will continue to explore dates for Spanta to visit Washington and sign a new U.S.-Afghanistan Declaration. END SUMMARY

2. (C) During a March 13 meeting with Department of Defense Under Secretary for Policy Eric Edelman, Department of State Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia Richard Boucher, National Security Council Special Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan Meghan O'Sullivan, and Ambassador Neumann just prior to the US-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Plenary, Foreign Minister Spanta highlighted the importance of the special US-Afghan relationship. Despite all the troubles last summer, the two countries had achieved much in Afghanistan, he said. Spanta stressed the two countries, shared values, such as democracy and a participatory civil society. He said it was not a simple job ending violence and terrorism in Afghanistan.

3. (C) Boucher reassured Spanta that the U.S. recognized the importance of the strategic relationship which will only grow over time. The goal was to build up the Afghan nation, one that could take its rightful place in the heart of Central Asia. He said the U.S. was ready to help Afghanistan tackle

the problems relating to security, governance, economic prosperity, and narcotics. He expressed U/S Burns, regrets that he was unable to attend the meeting.

Pakistan and Jirgas

14. (C) Spanta reported that an Afghan delegation was in Pakistan meeting with the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Prime Minister and Senate leaders. A Pakistan delegation plans to visit Afghanistan to continue the talks. Spanta noted that while there were no concrete results thus far, he was pleased that the preparatory process had begun. There were now positive signs from the Pakistani side, although different perceptions on timing still persisted. The Pakistanis say they need more time, reported Spanta. He called for U.S. help in continuing trilateral efforts to make the jirgas happen and to help improve relations. Spanta stressed that multiple instruments were needed to achieve this. He also called for greater democratization in Pakistan and hoped the fall elections would introduce more civilian rule as this was a key condition for peace between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Bugti

15. (C) There was brief discussion of Bugti's grandson who is believed to be in Afghanistan. Spanta reported that a Pakistani official (unnamed) recently visited Kabul to discuss the issue. Spanta believes a resolution can be found. He said he stressed to Pakistan that Afghanistan had no intention of interfering in its internal affairs. Spanta did not want to discuss the issue further and changed the

KABUL 00001009 002 OF 002

subject.

Strategic Partnership: Message to the People

16. (C) Spanta saw the real significance of the Strategic Partnership talks as sending a message to the Afghan people that the U.S. was committed to Afghanistan for the long-term. The other message was that the Afghan government was committed to good governance, rule of law, and building up its security forces. He said moderate Afghans who were supporting the democratization and modernization of the country needed to see that the U.S. and Afghanistan were working closely together to achieve this goal. The fanatics needed to know that this is what the majority of Afghans wanted. Spanta stressed that international terrorism could not be addressed without the support of moderates. He said a new U.S.-Afghan Declaration would need to highlight good governance and democratization to bring the right message to the people.

17. (C) Edelman agreed that the relationship was a long-term and enduring one. He noted that President Bush had made this point in his request to Congress for supplemental funding. Edelman said that during Secretary Gates, visit to Afghanistan, he also encouraged strengthening the Strategic Partnership process. The Under Secretary underscored the importance of good governance and anti-corruption efforts, points he has stressed in Congressional testimony. He explained that Congress was looking for progress on these fronts as a condition for continued support for Afghanistan. Edelman said both houses of Congress have stressed this key message. He called for sustained and intensive partnering with the U.S. but stressed that the Afghan side needed to make more effort. Boucher added that counternarcotics was another area that Congress was particularly concerned about. He noted that eradication efforts, mainly governor-led activities in Helmand, were off to a good start this year.

18. (C) Spanta agreed, adding it was impossible to have a functioning government and rule of law without fighting

corruption. He said achieving these goals involved a complex process as the country was still under the influence of those who had a vested interest in the violence and chaos of the previous eight years. He believed that corruption was prevalent because people were not secure in their lives. Therefore, the government needed to send the message that it was succeeding in ending terrorism, establishing democracy, and bringing security.

Meeting with the Secretary

¶9. (C) Assistant Secretary Boucher said he looked forward to Spanta's visit to the Washington to meet with the Secretary. Both sides would continue to explore dates. Setting a pattern of high-level visits and signing a new Declaration were top U.S. priorities. Spanta agreed. For the Afghans, signing a Declaration with the Secretary would be a huge symbolic act, he said.

¶10. (U) This message was cleared by the U.S. Delegation.

NEUMANN